



wendish news

W E N D I S H H E R I T A G E S O C I E T Y A U S T R A L I A

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Clockwise: 1. Part of the Les Kossatz sheep sculpture (see p.10). 2. & 3. Detail of Sorbian costume embroidery (see p.8). 4. Sorbian visitors from Werben, Anna Hotzan and Vera Guttke (see p.3).

PHOTOS: JOHN NOACK, CATHERINE GOSLING

Join our Country Tour

You are warmly invited, along with family and friends, to attend our tour to the Ararat and Stawell areas of Victoria, from Monday 4 May to Thursday 8 May 2026.

You may choose to participate in all or part of the Tour. We will be based in Ararat, visiting Stawell on Tuesday 5 May and Ararat on Wednesday 6 May. See itinerary and booking details on page 2.

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Calendar of upcoming events

Country Tour, 4–8 May 2026

Committee members Alex Frew and Betty Huf have graciously offered to lead us on a tour of the Ararat and Stawell areas in Victoria, from Monday 4 May to Thursday 7 May (inclusive). Participants have the option of attending all or part of the Tour. We will be based in Ararat, visiting Stawell on Tuesday 5 May and Ararat on Wednesday 6 May.

The proposed itinerary for our time in the Stawell area includes the Tourist Information Centre and Museum, Stawell Gift Hall of Fame, mine sites including the Stawell Gold Mine, and Cato Park.

In Ararat, the proposed itinerary includes a tour of the Aradale Asylum (formerly Ararat Lunatic Asylum), J Ward Museum (formerly J Ward Asylum for the Criminally Insane) and Gum San Chinese Heritage Centre. Our Society's brief AGM will be held following our evening meal in the function room at the Ararat Hotel Cafe Bistro on Wednesday 6 May. Proxy votes will be accepted.

Further options will be available for those who wish to extend their visit into Thursday and Friday. There may be an opportunity to visit the Langi Morgala Museum in Ararat and the historic wine and food village of Great Western, located between Ararat and Stawell. Possible sites include Salingers Café, Seppelt Wines underground cellar tour and Best's Wines.

Please make your own arrangements for accommodation in Ararat.

Please book by Monday 20 April 2026 with Alex Frew.

Email: amf8@bigpond.com

Mobile: 0407 542 702

More detailed information will be provided closer to the time, to those who book.

Annual General Meeting, Wednesday 6 May 2026

Our Society's brief AGM will be held on Wednesday 6 May following our evening meal in the function room at Ararat Hotel Café Bistro, 130 Barkly St, Ararat, Victoria. All are welcome.

Proxies will be accepted. Please appoint a proxy if you are unable to attend, to ensure that we have a quorum for this important meeting. Please see the proxy form enclosed in this Newsletter. Any member who is attending the meeting may be appointed as a proxy. Committee members may also be appointed as proxies eg. President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer or any of the Committee members listed in our Directory on page 12. Please post the proxy form to reach us by Friday 1 May.

Alternatively, you may email a message appointing a proxy to the address below. To appoint a proxy, please use the following wording:

"I,, being a paid member of the Wendish Heritage Society Aust. Inc., am unable to attend the AGM to be held on Saturday 31 May 2025. I appoint as my proxy to vote on my behalf at the meeting."

Please note that **you must sign** your message appointing a proxy. Please include an image of your signature.

Contact: Glenys Wollermann (Secretary)

Tel: (03) 9891 6652

Email: g.wollermann@y7mail.com

Zwar Reunion, 3 October 2026

It is 176 years since Michael Zwar arrived in Australia at the age of 20 and 171 years since he purchased 88 acres of land at what was to become known as Zwar's Hill, near Broadford in Victoria.

Dr Richard (Rick) Zwar and Dr Nicholas (Nick) Zwar invite descendants to attend an event to celebrate the family history and the connection to Broadford. Descendants of Michael, Johann and Peter Zwar are all welcome.

Date: Saturday 3 October 2026.

Venue: Gavan Hall, next to Saint Matthew's Church, 72 High St., Broadford, Vic.

Details: Please arrive around 11.00am. Formalities will take place from 11.30am–12.30pm, followed by a sandwich lunch.

RSVP: 18 September 2026.

Contact Nick Zwar by email nicholasz1959@gmail.com or by text to mobile 0417 063 061.

40th Anniversary Annual Luncheon, 24 October 2026

Save the date!

Our Society's milestone anniversary will be celebrated at our Annual Luncheon on Saturday 24 October 2026.

The venue will be Oscar's Hotel and Bar, 16 Doveton Street South, Ballarat. Our Guest Speaker will be Julia Rubinstein who is a Wend from Schleife, a traditional village in Saxony. Further details of the Luncheon will be provided closer to the time.



Past Events



One of the highlights for Anna and Vera was their Sydney Harbour kayak experience, where they paddled under the Bridge and alongside the Opera House. Inset: Anna and Vera at the departure gate, Tullamarine Airport, Melbourne, on 13 February 2026. PHOTOS: ANNA HOTZAN, COLIN HUF

Visitors from Werben, September 2025 – February 2026

Two young Wendish women, Anna **Hotzan** and Vera **Guttke**, visited Australia from Werben in the Spreewald region of Germany. They travelled in South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland.

In Victoria, they were hosted by Betty and Colin Huf in Tarrington, Margaret and Jeff Gork in Ballarat, and Alexandra Frew and her husband Mark in Melbourne. Jenny Gellatly and Meg Huebner took the girls on a trip to Broken Hill in New South Wales, giving them an experience of the Outback. We are grateful to all those who generously hosted the two young women and showed them interesting sites.

Anna and Vera were Guest Speakers at our Annual Luncheon (see Report pp.4–7). While in Melbourne, they gave a talk to a class of German students at Monash University and were also interviewed (in German) on the SBS Radio German Program. There were many other highlights during their travels.

We are grateful to them for raising the awareness of Wendish culture and heritage in the community.

We thank Anna and Vera for the following article:

Six months ago my cousin and I began our journey in Australia. We could never have imagined just how much we would experience, learn and discover during those months. Looking back, it was one of the most meaningful and formative experiences of our lives—one that we will remember with deep gratitude for many years to come.

From the very beginning, we were fascinated by the breathtaking landscapes, the vastness and the diversity of the country, but it was the people we met along the way who made it truly unforgettable. We were welcomed by people who not only gave us hospitality but also shared their daily lives, stories, and traditions with us. For this generosity and kindness, we remain deeply grateful.

Some of our most memorable experiences were those we shared with the people who hosted us. One highlight was driving along the breathtaking Great Ocean Road with its dramatic coastline, towering rock formations and spectacular views. It was truly an unforgettable experience.

We also spent a lot of time exploring Australia independently. We visited some of Australia's most famous landmarks: the Great Barrier Reef and the Sydney



Opera House. Seeing these sites in person far surpasses seeing them in the media. We also found joy in the smaller moments, such as encountering kangaroos and koalas and relaxing on stunning beaches.

Another particularly meaningful experience was learning more about the different cultures. It was especially fascinating to discover more about the Sorbian community in Australia. Realizing that there are people on the other side of the world who share a connection to our culture was deeply moving for us.

During these six months, we did not only discover a new country—we also grew personally. We learned to approach people with greater openness, to understand different perspectives, and to embrace new experiences.

When we look back on this time today, one feeling stands above all: gratitude. Gratitude for the people we met, for the places we were able to see, and for the memories that will stay with us forever. Australia will always hold a very special place in our hearts.

ANNA HOTZAN & VERA GUTTKE

Annual Luncheon, 18 October 2025

This event was very successful. We were very pleased to welcome two visitors from Werben in Lower Lusatia as our Guest Speakers: Anna Hotzan and Vera Guttke. They gave a PowerPoint presentation and showed a “Welcome to Werben” video, taking viewers on a journey through Werben as it is today.

There were 38 Luncheon participants: Catherine Gosling, Bronwyn Schier, Mary Ann Callinan, John Callinan, Betty Huf, Colin Huf, Rob Wuchatsch, Sue Gravenall, Anna Hotzan, Vera Guttke, Alexandra Frew, Jenny Gellatly, Meg Huebner, Debra Talbot, Clay Kruger, Barry Krueger, John Noack, Ene Noack, Beryl Nagorcka, Christine Modra, John Modra, Margaret Gork, Rob Deutscher, Bruce Meyer, Wendy Meyer, Julie Ballinger, June Winter, Peter Winter, Richard Albert, Gladys Koch, Ruby Groves, Tony Brinkmann, Dorothy Brinkmann, David Deutscher, Peter Deutscher, Daryl Deutscher, Shirley Ashfield and Glenys Wollermann. There were 6 people who tendered their apologies: Kneller Lehmann, Sandra Hayward, Mick Ampt, Moira Nagorcka, Kath Wade and Dorothy Brown.

We thank John Noack for the following report:

The City of Ballarat has continued to provide a suitable central location in Victoria for our Society’s Annual Luncheon. The new venue was the Long Room at Oscar’s Hotel and Bar at 16 Doveton Street South. The participants ordered from a Custom Menu, which provided 4 choices for entrée, 8 choices for main course and 4 choices for dessert. All of the diners were clearly satisfied with their selections.



Top: Upper Lusatian costume dolls; Secretary/Editor Glenys Wollermann cutting her 70th birthday cake. Below: Wendish display table at the Annual Luncheon.
PHOTOS: JOHN NOACK, CATHERINE GOSLING

Many Wendish descendants in Australia can claim to have Werben as their ancestral home. George Nielsen’s list of Wendish immigrants includes the following surnames from Werben: Borrack, Dahlitz/Dalitz, Domaschenz, Duschka/Duschke, Gardi, Gulbin, Habner, Handreck, Jarick, Kamenka, Koalick, Kolosche/Kollosche, Kschammer, Lewitzka, Lucas, Materna, Matschke, Modra, Rapko, Salmann, Scheetz, Schiemenz, Schilka, Schuppan, Starick, Twartz, Vogt and Warmo. No doubt, some of these surnames are still present in Werben today.

Guest Speakers Anna Hotzan and Vera Guttke gave a PowerPoint presentation about the continuing interest in and importance of the traditional Sorbian/Wendish language, culture, customs and costumes in their home of Werben in Lower Lusatia. This was followed by a “Welcome to Werben” video.



Top: Guests enjoying the Annual Luncheon. Foreground front left: John Noack opposite Rob Wuchatsch. Front right: Clay Kruger opposite Beryl Nagorcka and Richard Albert, with Ruby Groves on the end seat. Below left: Alex Frew, Jenny Gellatly and Meg Huebner at the Luncheon. Right: Vera Guttke informing guests of Easter Traditions in Lusatia. PHOTOS: JOHN NOACK, CATHERINE GOSLING

Growing up in Werben:

Anna and Vera are both aged 18. They live near each other at the farming end of Werben (Lower Sorbian: *Wjerbno*), which has about 1,700 residents. They both went to Primary School at Burg until 6th grade. Anna then went to the Lower Sorbian High School in Cottbus, where she learned the Sorbian/Wendish language. She was even able to write one of her exams in Sorbian. Vera went to the Evangelical High School in Cottbus, but she learned Spanish! Since the age of 4, both have engaged in dancing in a group called the *Fussballgirls* (Football Girls) in Werben. This is a mixture of jazz, ballet and modern dance. They perform during matches. They also enjoy snow skiing in winter.

Anna and Vera are cousins, with their mothers being members of the Jarick family. They have Jarick relatives in the Albury–Wodonga region in Australia.

“Welcome to Werben”:

The narrators of this video, Lena Melnikov and Anna Hotzan, state: *We would like to show you just how beautiful our village is by taking you on a journey through our home.* Firstly, they show us the *Gutshäuser* (manor houses). An old legend has it that the devil once rode over Werben and dropped 5 noblemen, who built the manor houses in the area. These 5 manor houses form the heart of the village. The most important, *Gutshaus Seydlitz*, is used today as the mayor’s office and meeting place for village associations.



An interview is held with *Ortschronistin* (local chronicler) Franziska Gürnth, who takes care of historic documents and photos. She also keeps current records, so that future generations will know what life was like in Werben in the 21st century. A recent acquisition, from the estate of a resident of Werben, is a wonderful collection. The resident had researched individual streets and created a history of each property. Each entry includes old photos and details of the past and current owners, including those who have moved away or recently arrived.

The next place visited is the *Kita Pustebume*, the Werben kindergarten, which cares for 165 children from Werben and the surrounding area. In line with its aim to help children connect closely with nature, the kindergarten has a vegetable garden where children can grow their own vegetables and eat them.

In the heart of the village there is also the Church, known affectionately as the *Gemüsekirche* (vegetable church). The Church gained this nickname due to its ceiling, which is decorated with paintings of vegetables and fruits. Werben and 3 other villages form the parish.

Next to the Church is the *Hotel Zum Stern*, the centre of most community activities. A special highlight is the cooperative *Un-Kraut-Laden* (shop) run by local chef and herb expert Peter Franke. His motto is “move ahead and return to nature”. Visitors can learn about the wide range of herbs, wild berries, vegetables, fruit and grains of the Spreewald region. This store is a popular attraction for tourists.

Tourism is not the only source of employment in Werben. One of the largest employers is the *Agrargenossenschaft* (an agricultural cooperative). This business manages 2,100 hectares of land and about 1,500 head of cattle. Meat production is the primary focus.

To understand the importance of agriculture in Werben, it is worth taking a look at the *Landtechnischer Heimathof* (Agricultural Heritage Farm). An interview is held with Johannes Schilka, who explains that the heritage farm is designed to represent the traditional farmyard with barns, a manor house, workshops and a large exhibition. The exhibition tells the story of 100 years of agricultural development in the Spreewald and the Lausitz (Lusatia) region.

The local villagers are very pleased to welcome new arrivals. Recently a new bakery, called *Das Backstübchen*, has opened. Werben also offers good medical care: a doctor, a dentist and a physiotherapist. Leisure facilities include a sports ground and clubhouse, a playground and a new multifunctional centre. The village also has a volunteer fire brigade.

Many young people have chosen to return to Werben after completing their studies. Some live with their parents and grandparents, under one roof. Others live in a



2025 Easter Tour group members meeting Anna and Vera in the Lutheran Church in Werben. It is nicknamed “vegetable church” because its ceiling is decorated with paintings of the vegetables, herbs and fruits grown in the district. PHOTO: COLIN HUF

small apartment within a large housing estate. On the outskirts of Werben there is a new residential area of individual family homes.

The Werben community includes two smaller villages: Brahmow (Lower Sorbian: *Brama*) and Ruben (Lower Sorbian: *Rubyn*). Brahmow has 170 residents, who are proudly welcoming back young people to



the area. The village features a monument honouring the local soldiers who were killed in World War I and World War II. Included are the surnames Wentow, Ramoth, Gollasch and Bubner.

In Ruben, a large village sign features photos of the traditional costumes, celebrations, festivals and other local events. A war memorial plaque, listing the soldiers from Ruben who died in World War I and World War II, includes the surnames Guttke, Bramke, Kossatz and Noack. Ruben has 235 residents but is “becoming young again” with the return of some of the young people who grew up here and moved away.

Werben celebrates festivals and traditions which

Top: The angel font in the Lutheran Church in Werben is suspended from the ceiling. When it is lowered for baptisms, a bowl of water is placed in the wreath that the angel is holding. Ancestors who emigrated from Werben were probably baptised here.

Below: A map of Lower and Upper Lusatia showing major towns and cities and the costumes of those areas.

PHOTOS: COLIN HUF, JOHN NOACK

bring people together as a community, every year. Two examples of old traditions which continue today are the *Maibaum* (raising of the May pole) and *Hahnrupfen* (rooster plucking).

The *Maibaum* (May pole) is raised on 1 May or on the evening of 30 April. The pole is a narrow tree trunk and its raising symbolizes the coming of Spring and of fertility. The pole is decorated with colourful ribbons and garlands. This event is accompanied by songs, dancing and festivities.

Hahnrupfen (rooster plucking) is a harvest custom held in late summer, typically at the end of July. A tall gate is erected and a dead rooster is hung from the top beam. Young men on horseback ride through the gate and try to grab the rooster’s head and wings, while at full gallop. The rider who pulls off the head is the *König* (King) or *Kral* in Sorbian. In this ritual the rooster, called a *kokot* (cock) in Sorbian, is viewed as a symbol of fertility, with powers to influence the harvest. The event concludes with a festival featuring traditional music, costumes and dancing.

Another popular annual social event is the *Ball der Vereine* (Ball of the Clubs) where members of local associations and groups gather together to celebrate. The program features dancing, performances (such as by the *Fussballgirls*) and music. The *Ball der Vereine* in Werben is typically held in March or April at the *Hotel Zum Stern*.

The video presentation ends with the following sentiment:

Our village is shaped by the people who live here. In Werben we preserve the old, live in the present and create new traditions for the future. Na Zase Jwizenje! (Discover this for yourself!)

Anna Hotzan and Vera Guttke made sure that, at this annual Wendish Luncheon, we participants were well educated, well entertained and were kept up to date with what is happening now in Lower Lusatia.

JOHN NOACK

We thank Catherine Gosling for these related links:

<http://www.werben-im-spreewald.de/>

<https://fussballgirls2000.de/>

<https://www.unkrautladen-im-spreewaldhotel.de/>

<https://www.spreewald-hotel-stern-werben.de/>



Donation of a Lower Sorbian Festive Costume

At the Luncheon, Anna assisted Vera in putting on the handmade traditional Lower Sorbian festive costume which belonged to their grandmother. Putting on a costume is a meticulous, time-consuming process, as many pins are required to secure the intricate pieces. We were overwhelmed when Anna and Vera informed us of their wish to donate the costume to our Society. We are very grateful to them for their thoughtful and generous gift. This costume is a significant addition to our Society's collection. The more we learn about the costume, the more special it has become!

Below: Vera Guttke modelling the Sorbian costume of the Werben area; President Betty Huf presenting gifts to Anna and Vera at the Luncheon. Right: Detail of the lace and embroidery on the headscarf.

PHOTOS: JOHN NOACK, CATHERINE GOSLING

We thank Anna Hotzan and Vera Guttke for the following information regarding the costume's provenance:

This Lower Sorbian festive costume was brought from the Spreewald region to Australia by us, Anna Hotzan and Vera Guttke (cousins) and donated to the Wendish Heritage Society Australia. It comes from our family heritage (Jarick) and represents the passing down of Sorbian/Wendish traditions over several generations.

The skirt belonged to Marie Jarick, née Jank, from Burg (Spreewald). She was born in 1905 and received the skirt as a confirmation gift in 1925. The embroidered band was added at a later date and was newly made by hand in 2025 by Simone Kossick from Werben. The lace was also added later and is new.

The aprons were made by Anna Chilla from Ruben, born in 1912. She embroidered them alone and by hand after the war, around 1952, during the winter spinning season.

The headscarf belonged to Antje Hotzan, née Jarick, from Werben. She had it made in 1989 by a dressmaker in Fehrow.

Our grandmother Edith Jarick, née Chilla, from Ruben, took care of the preservation of the costume. It comes from the possession of her mother and mother-in-law. To this day, our family lives in Werben in the Spreewald and continues to uphold Sorbian/Wendish traditions.

ANNA HOTZAN AND VERA GUTTKE





Interview by Lusatian filmmaker, 18 December 2025

Lusatian filmmaker Donald Saischowa visited Melbourne in December 2025. He interviewed John Noack at the Immigration Museum on 18 December.

This interview was held in connection with Donald Saischowa's short film on the artist Les Kossatz. This film was broadcast in Germany on the Sorbian TV program *Luzyca*, for the first time on 21 March 2026. See <https://www.rbb-online.de/luzyca/>

New book release

Wheel Tracks: The History of Waltanna Tractors: The James Nagorcka Story, by Graham Greenwood

James Nagorcka is a great-grandson of Christian Nagorcka (1826–1908). Christian was born in Radewiese, a village in the Lower Lusatia region of Brandenburg, Germany.

Christian grew up in the town of Peitz, near Radewiese. He migrated to Australia in 1857 on the ship *Gottorp*. In 1865 he married Emilie Zbierski. Christian and Emilie bought land near Hamilton, Victoria, naming the property *Peitz*, after the town where Christian grew up. They reared 12 children, 9 boys and 3 girls.

Farming became a way of life for the Nagorckas, and perhaps Christian laid the foundations, with his innovative use of machinery, for what was to come in future generations.

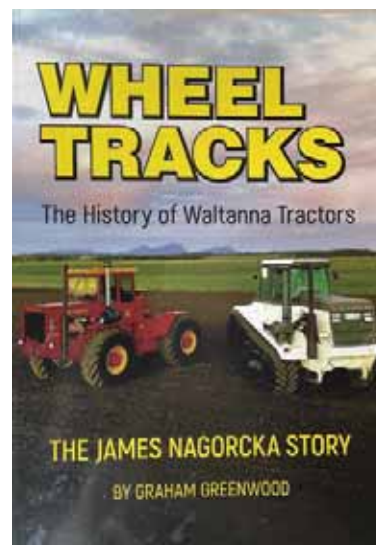
We thank Ashleigh McIntosh for the following extracts from her book review:

Take a journey through time and soil with *Wheel Tracks* – an inspiring story that digs deep into the history of farming in the Hamilton region and uncovers the remarkable life of one man, James Nagorcka, whose ideas revolutionised agriculture in Australia.

The Birth of Australian-Made Tractors

In a small Hamilton workshop, James began doing what few others dared to try: building machinery that truly worked for Australian farmers, on Australian soil, in Australian conditions. He listened to farmers, spent time in the field, and turned problems into possibilities.

In 1977, he built his first tractor – custom-designed for local conditions. That same tractor is still operating today. Over the years, he developed new implements, designed unique features, and even patented improvements to rubber tyres. His work didn't just support farmers – it empowered them.



A Hero to Farmers, a Partner in Life

Behind James Nagorcka's success was a powerful partnership with his wife, June (née Menzel). Together, they shared not only a life but a vision. Their bond was a blend of friendship and business – each supporting the other through setbacks and triumphs.

For All Ages and Interests

Whether you're a young farmer, a scholar curious about Australian agricultural history, or someone who simply loves a good underdog story, *Wheel Tracks* has something for you. No need to love tractors—or even understand them.

With its simple, engaging writing and beautiful images scattered throughout, this story speaks to anyone who values hard work, persistence, and Aussie ingenuity.

ASHLEIGH MCINTOSH
BOOK COVER PHOTO: MICK AMPT

Wheel Tracks is available for purchase from the online store [see www.waltannafarms.com.au] for \$66 plus postage, or phone 0355 733 392 to place an order.



Tribute to artist and sculptor Les Kossatz (1943–2011)

We thank John Noack for the following article:

The year 2026 marks the 15th Anniversary of the death of Les Kossatz, who was born on 10 January 1943 and who died on 15 February 2011. His remarkable artistic achievements are therefore being remembered and celebrated by both the Sorbs in Lusatia, including his appreciative Kossatz relatives, and by the Wendish descendants and others in Australia. Les Kossatz was very proud of his Wendish origins. He visited the village of Drehnow, the home of his ancestors, during the GDR era.

The best tribute to Les Kossatz and his artistic work is the 264-page book titled *Les Kossatz: The Art of Existence*, which was produced by the Heide Museum of Modern Art in 2008 and published by Macmillan Art. It contains 8 informative and enlightening chapters by 8 different scholars. It features many colourful illustrations of Les's paintings and sculptures. I am pleased that my personal copy of this book includes his signature.

My Tribute presents some selected highlights from this book, in chronological order. Such a summary confirms the amazing artistic talent, the hard labour and the profound depth of thinking of Les Kossatz, during the 68 years of his life.

John Noack's Tribute to Artist and Sculptor Les Kossatz is published on our website.

See www.wendishheritage.org/articles

The following is an earlier obituary for Les Kossatz, written by John Noack in March 2011:

Les Kossatz (1943–2011)

Leslie George Kossatz was a widely-acclaimed artist and sculptor who was well known for his sheep sculptures. He was a descendant of the Wendish Kossatz family from Lusatia in Germany. He died from cancer on 15 February 2011.

Les grew up at St Andrews, north of Melbourne. He spent some of his life as a lecturer at the RMIT School of Art and at the Monash University School of Art. Back in the 1960s, Les experimented with different sorts of materials and techniques for creating artworks. Behind his creations was a deep "interest in the tensions between the natural world and the conventions of society".

During the 1970s, this tension developed into a deep concern over the "human desecration of the Australian landscape". His painting *Opening Ground Country Grass 1970* features a deep crack in the land. His *Forgotten Landscape 1972* sadly included just the decapitated heads of some native animals, reminding viewers that Australia's unspoilt nature is now mythical.

By 1972, he was also sculpting sheep from cast components and wool. His interest in sheep was inspired by his experience of nursing an injured sheep at his farm at St Andrews. The sheep for Les operated at two



L to R: 1. "Coming and Going", Les Kossatz's 1982 sheep sculpture, originally displayed at the Arts Centre Melbourne. 2. Les Kossatz in his studio in Carlton, Victoria, in March 2009. 3 & 4. Les Kossatz's stained glass windows in The Religious Centre at Monash University, Clayton campus. PHOTOS: JOHN NOACK, DONALD SAISCHOWA

levels or extremes: a sheep was representative of the passive, animistic spirit of the land but it also stood for the "squattocracy" and conquest of the land, so clearly depicted by Les in his *Squatter: Ram in a Chair* 1983. With head back and feet up, the ram clearly depicted the squatter's tempting of fate with his arrogant behaviour towards man, animal and authority.

His *Am Zoo Berlin* series in the 1990s clearly depicted the quest by the East Germans for consumer goods, as a consequence of the collapse of the Berlin Wall. Les displayed some of these at a German Celebration at Tarrington, near Hamilton, back in the early 1990s. Some of his backpacks were featured in the Tarrington Lutheran Hall. These were loaded with luxuries from West Berlin, which, in the artist's mind, were being transported back to Eastern Berlin after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

His Kakadu paintings took up again the tension between the landscape and the human compulsion to control natural resources. Les depicted this by including technical charts and computer diagrams on his landscapes.

His *Postcards on Religion* presented some thoughts from world religions and challenges to the exclusive claims made by some. He observed that "Christianity became implicated in the world which it sought to save" and that it continually changes. He informed us that "in Palestine its concern was Fellowship; in Greece it was Philosophy; in Italy it was Institutions and in Europe it became the Culture. In America it became an Enterprise".

His 2008 Exhibition, *The Art of Existence*, at the Heide Museum of Modern Art in Bulleen, Victoria, displayed about 100 items. The accompanying book, *Les Kossatz: The Art of Existence* included on page 179 an exploration of the issue: "Is art reality? Is reality art?" Perhaps the Exhibition's title, *The Art of Existence*, says it all. You can't have one without the other!

This large and colourful book, titled *Les Kossatz: The Art of Existence*, presented his gradually developing stages of artistic achievement since the early 1960s. Diana Gribble, the book's publisher and partner of Les, who died on 4 October in the same year 2011, provided a useful chronology. Various eminent artists and scholars like Patrick McCaughey contributed sections to this book.

A lasting memory for some admirers of the artworks of Les was the visit on 1 March 2010 to his studio in Carlton, where Les had worked for the past 30 years.

Fortunately, there are displays in Melbourne of Les Kossatz's artistic creations.

JOHN NOACK

NB: Les Kossatz's sheep sculptures are currently on long-term display at the Heide Museum of Modern Art, having been moved from Arts Centre Melbourne during the Melbourne Arts Precinct Transformation Project. Twenty stained glass windows, made by Les Kossatz, feature in The Religious Centre at Monash University, Clayton campus.



General news

Golden Wedding Anniversary

Congratulations to Betty and Colin Huf, who recently celebrated 50 happy years of marriage.

Betty and Colin celebrated this special anniversary at a luncheon with family and friends at Alexandra House in Hamilton, Victoria, on Saturday 20 December 2025.

This was the same venue as their wedding reception held on 20 December 1975. We wish Betty and Colin many more happy years together.

Betty (Elizabeth née Habel) and Colin Huf sign the Register after their marriage at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Hamilton, Victoria, on 20 December 1975.

Directory

Aims: The Wendish Heritage Society Australia Inc., researches and promotes the Wendish/Sorbian and Germanic heritage and family history in Australia.

Postal Address: P.O. Box 4050, Box Hill South, Victoria 3128

Meeting Room and Research Centre: St Aidan's Community Centre, 12 Surrey St, Box Hill South, Victoria. (Melway 61 C1)

Hours: By appointment. Please contact the Secretary.

Our Society Logo: The logo, an Australian gum leaf and a Lusatian linden leaf, represent the connection between the Wendish descendants in Australia and the Sorbs in Lusatia.

Membership & Newsletter Subscription: \$35 for single membership and \$40 for joint membership for one calendar year due at the start of each year. The form is included in our September Newsletter for the following year. Additional donations can also be made for the expanding work of the Society and we thank most sincerely those of you who have made such generous donations.

Publicity: We welcome any publicity which you can give about our Society and its planned events.

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